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ABSTRACT

This paper examines college and university educational administration (EDAD) professional-preparation programs and their current inertia caused by an intellectually based "war over standards" of knowledge and information. It describes how much of EDAD professional-preparation programs' approach to knowledge is largely premised in conventional practice and how the powershift for control, authority, and influence over public schools can no longer continue to be reduced to the mere possession of information by school leaders. The locus for knowledge is momentously different from that of the past, and as such, is now anchored in the creation, management, and dissemination of new forms of a knowledge base driven by accelerated information technologies and emerging educational, entrepreneurial enterprises. Such enterprises range from private educational corporations to charter schools and are fully operational within the internal context of public schools. The ultimate purpose of a "knowledge base," it is claimed, is to gain legitimacy for EDAD professional-preparation programs as well as to reaffirm control, authority, and influence over its wisdom of practice while responding to the new power brokers of knowledge and requests for accountability in rapidly changing public-school systems. (Author/RJM)

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Generating New Knowledge Bases in Educational Administration Professional Preparation Programs

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Abstract

College and university educational administration (EDAD) professional preparation programs at the dawn of the twenty first century are snarled in an intellectually based "war over standards" of knowledge and information. This is the contingency even while much of EDAD professional preparation programs approach to knowledge today is largely premised in conventional practice. The powershift for control, authority, and influence over our nation's public schools can no longer continue to be isolated or reduced to the mere possession of information by school leaders. Today's locus for knowledge, however, is momentously different from that of the past as such is now anchored in the creation, management and dissemination of new forms of knowledge base (KB) driven by accelerated information technologies and emerging educational entrepreneureal enterprises. Compounding the challenge is the fact that these enterprises range from private educational corporations to charter schools and that despite being externally generated, are fully operational within the internal context of public schools. Thus the ultimate purpose of a KB is to gain legitimacy for EDAD professional preparation programs as well as to reaffirm control, authority, and influence over its wisdoms of practice while responding to the new power brokers of knowledge and requests for accountability in rapidly changing public school systems.

Generating New Knowledge Bases in Educational Administration Professional Preparation Programs

College and university educational administration (EDAD) professional preparation programs at the dawn of the twenty first century are snarled in an intellectually based "war over standards" of knowledge and information. This conflict is nothing new to higher education. In 1825, a student rebellion resulted in the Yale Report of 1828 (Fiering, 1971) which strived to remove dead languages from the university curriculum. Even though the Yale Report of 1828 argued persuasively for the importance of imagination in advancing the university's knowledge base (KB) in that era, it failed and was subdued by a vigorous recapture of past knowledge despite its attempt to harness evolving human wisdom.

Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626) is likely the most widely acclaimed proponent of the acquisition of knowledge (i.e. *Nam et ipsa scienta potestas est* - "knowledge itself is power"). Bacon's primary purpose for knowledge was anchored in religious meditation as opposed to advanced professional preparation. Today's locus for EDAD knowledge, however, is momentously different in that such is largely in the creation, management and dissemination of new KB's driven by accelerated information technologies and emerging educational entrepreneureal enterprises within public schools. In the mid-sixteenth century knowledge itself may have been power but in the twenty first century, knowledge **about** knowledge itself will be power.

The decade of the 1980's involved a maelstrom of reform movements in our nation's Education. The benchmark was 1983's **A Nation at Risk** (National Commission on Excellence

in Education, 1983) which became the most highly publicized public policy paper on education of the twentieth century. Even though it had little actual effect upon education as did the Yale Report of 1828, in a sense, "war" was declared upon the "rising tide of mediocrity...that threatens our very future as a nation and a people," to maintain America's "slim competitive edge...in the world markets." As a result the current "war over standards" in college and university EDAD professional preparation programs had been declared and by 1987 educational accreditation bodies (e.g. National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 1987) had implemented a "new" requirement now widely known and accepted as the Knowledge Base.

The pursuit of knowledge was not the true revelation of the 1980's educational reform movement as many governmental policy makers would like to have the public believe. Rather, the natural emergent KB from the intellectual nymphs of various disciplines became the true dun of EDAD knowledge and collective wisdom. Alas, knowledge possessed by college and university EDAD professional preparation programs and respective faculties had potential to become transformed beyond merely a "pedestrian KB" (Shulman, 1987) where generally well-educated persons simply walked into educational leadership positions "off the street". The EDAD KB possessed a potential Darwinian quality of being a product as opposed to a previous enigmatic Socratic process. The EDAD rhetoric of the past was thus compelled to become an overt reality for the future, now regarded and accepted as KB.

Much of EDAD's approach to knowledge is still premised in conventional practice. Yet that which is considered common in public schools is also now considered to be insufficient by the public and its policy makers. An often made remark about the "ivory tower" persona, by

those not privy to the internal dynamics of higher education, is that EDAD programs are largely comprised of "*old dogs* [i.e. faculty with prior public school administrative experience] *who teach new dogs* [i.e. current public school teachers] *old tricks* [i.e. conventional practice] *that no longer work* [i.e. for the future]." Thus the actual overseers of EDAD (i.e. accreditation bodies) demanded that EDAD professional preparation programs pursue a normative approach to knowledge for responsiveness to public school constituencies with a visible and genuine KB that represented "a firm core of professional knowledge on which to build a stable curriculum" (Bok, 1985-86, p.6).

Quite apart from the long traditions of EDAD professional preparation programs within academe that were based upon the Middle Ages, EDAD programs and faculty have in the 1990's been thrust into future shock with a failure to do so resulting in severe penalty. For example, in 1990, over sixty percent of all EDAD programs seeking institutional accreditation by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education were denied largely in part due to the absence of a manifested and cohort KB. The connection of relating pure knowledge structure with action decisions in absentia of the error of reification became paramount. Reification consists of an abstract idea representing certain properties of claimed knowledge, whereas Cohen (1989) identified its error as "confusing the idea with reality" (p.73).

As a result of the activating dynamics from a bona fide knowledge base -rather than merely conventional practice- college and university EDAD professional preparation programs desiring to survive, let alone prosper, must now respond to broad influences and trends such as the continuities and discontinuities in the national disposition, in addition to the ambiguous

realities of a competitive global future in our nation's education. The accountable college and university EDAD professional preparation programs that desire to become situated at the center of the powershift of educational administration knowledge, school leadership paradigms and emerging educational entrepreneureal -that despite being externally generated, are now fully operational within the internal context of public schools- are in a state of metamorphosis. Thus, those college and university EDAD professional preparation programs that are truly poised for the twenty-first century have undergone a knowledge based organization transformational that as suggested by Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson (1996) is characterized by substantial and discontinuous change rather than incremental adjustment of current practice.

In 1990 the axiom, "a prophet is seldom welcome in one's homeland," became clearly reversed within the inner sanctum of national power structures by the publication of **Powershift** (Toffler, 1990). Toffler stepped out from being a science fictionalist of the 1960's to an internationally noted futurist with the 1970 publication of **Future Shock** and the 1980 publication of **The Third Wave**. Although widely read among scholars, business, and world leaders, Toffler's trilogy did not receive mass public accord until the publication of **Powershift** which spent four months in 1990 on the New York Times best seller list. Toffler's trilogy, a twenty-five year odyssey, was described by himself with "**Future Shock** looking at the process of change...**The Third Wave** focusing on the directions of change...[and] **Powershift** dealing with the control of change" (1990, p. xix). Historical and/or archival research of both **Future Shock** and **The Third Wave** would indicate that Toffler's first two works were clearly against the then-current public opinion that generated a tidal wave of commentary. So controversial was

Future Shock (1970) in the prediction of the fracturing of the nuclear family, the genetic revolution, the throwaway society, as well as the massive revolt against established education, that the term "future shock" became accepted nomenclature of our nation's culture in a negative fictional sense. As the predictive scenarios identified in **Future Shock** (1970) and **The Third Wave** (1980) became realities not only in our nation's society, but the global community as well, **Powershift** (1990) became publicly embraced and accepted as predictive detail of "new paths to power opened by a world in mass upheaval" (Toffler, 1990, p. i.)

From the collapse of the Soviet Union and global war against Iraq in 1991 to GTE Corporation's 1997 $28 billion cash megamerger to buycut MCI (van Voorst, 1997), our nation's public perceives these change actions as random and chaotic. Quite to the contrary, those and ever evolving global changes in our society are not haphazard, unsystematic, or unrelated. The interconnectedness of global and educational trends is nested in knowledge, not the infinite bleeps of information presented by the media in circus of unrelated trends absentia a paradigm of interdependence. Thus the changes of our world as viewed by the general public is perceived with a sense of anarchy or lunacy and a desire to return or restore our society to the "good ol' days" and public education to "the 3 R's." Hence the simplistic outcry by audiences participating in media talk shows for "communication and education" as being the simplistic solutions to our societal dilemmas.

The powershift for control, authority, and influence over America' public schools cannot be isolated or reduced to mere possession of information. If Bacon's postulate that "knowledge itself is power" today remained true, the control, authority, and influence over public education

would have already empowered the our nation's citizenry to act upon such given the overdose of information (i.e. knowledge itself) it already possessed. For example, no longer does the our nation's public have to wait for board of education actions in the next day's newspaper to be informed as it did in 1985; for today, the local citizenry can immediately find out that board of education non-renewed the superintendent before the meeting is adjourned via public access cable television. Alas, information (i.e. knowledge) itself is totally insufficient to empower an educational administrator or public school system. Rather, it is the knowledge **about** knowledge that now empowers school leadership and the educational environment.

Prior to the 1945 G.I. Bill and subsequent college financial aid programs, the vast majority of the our nation's public had little or no access to a college education let alone opportunity to interact with a scholar. Yet today due to rapidly expanding informational technologies all our nation's from preschool through retirement ages are bombarded daily with noted professional commentary on educational issues ranging from vouchers to curricula. In an ironic sense, the our nation's public's conglomerate access to the once lofty higher education experience has resulted in EDAD programs and faculty losing intellectual autonomy and exclusive privilege of self-determined academic freedom to political correctness and public accountability.

A KB was described by Reynold's (1989) as the difference between "state of the art" of knowledge and its "state of practice." Galluzo and Pankratz (1990) implied that a KB was a body of knowledge substance and structure of a discipline that results in informed decision making practice. In short, college and university EDAD professional preparation programs KB's

must be an amalgamation of theory, research, and wisdoms of practice within an epistemic connoisseurship (Eisner, 1991) of educational administration itself.

Murray (1989) encouraged college students to adopt a skeptical view toward the claims of theorists, researchers and professors because of the fact that disciplined KB's in higher education were still in the infancy of formal development. Skepticism aside, education reformers and EDAD's accreditation bodies have been adamant in the edict that college and university programs be grounded in a KB of theory, research and wisdoms of practice. Further heightening ambiguity has been the necessity for college and university EDAD professional preparation program KB's that are reality, not rhetoric, and evidenced themselves in some visible type of product. Prior to this externally based mandate, many scholars in college and university EDAD professional preparation programs had adopted the self-purposeful legacy of knowledge base without providing attention to the process of its development as well as articulation with both existing and emerging constructs of theory, research, and wisdoms of practice.

The purpose for the college and university EDAD professional preparation programs has long appeared to be discipline based with an academic orientation (Feiman-Nemser, 1990) whereas the processes of such tend to be profession based with a pragmatic orientation (Schon, 1983). With respect to organizational theory and design, the KB concept in college and university EDAD professional preparation programs has suffered from inappropriate functional and product structures (Daft, 1989), because of an absence of developmental coordination within the interdependence of program purpose and process as well as the decentralized structure of colleges and universities themselves.

In short, the ultimate purpose of a KB is to gain legitimacy for college and university EDAD professional preparation programs so as to reaffirm control, authority, and influence with epistemic connoisseurship while responding to the new power brokers of knowledge in our nation's education, citizenry requests for accountability and emerging educational entrepreneureal enterprises in public schools. It is apparent that if college and university EDAD professional preparation programs do not respond to this challenge that support -fiscal and public education- will be jeopardized while the private economic sector (e.g. lateral entry, vouchers, public education enterprises, etc.) will eagerly assume the responsibility. To that end scholars within college and university EDAD professional preparation programs are compelled to invoke a KB strategy to help the discipline achieve overall performance goals in terms of effectiveness and efficiency if they desire to continue in the area of professional preparation and expand their boundaries of leadership in our nation's schools. The end may appear clear to college and university EDAD professional preparation programs but, the means remains translucent at best. The powershift within college and university EDAD professional preparation programs from outworn KB's is already seriously challenged with the traditional EDAD power structure nested in academe itself already rendered obsolete.

A significant body of literature exists which identifies the salient characteristics of a KB, the purpose of a KB, and the necessary schema for EDAD to determine effectiveness of KB product outcomes. There also exists a significant body of literature that suggests the inherent problems and difficulties associated with the creation of KB's in specific disciplines. The multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary processes, however, let alone the transdisciplinary

process, of creating college and university EDAD professional preparation program KB's was found to be extremely lacking to further perpetuate a genuine knowledge inertia within the discipline of EDAD.

Innovation models of group based development have been in existence for several decades. College and university EDAD professional preparation program curricula, however, is largely characterized by individual-oriented models of the innovation process (Rudolph, 1977) internally bound by individual academic freedom and "turf protection" by faculty while externally presented as an open, collegial and collaborative forum of scholarly advancement of intellect or knowledge. The reality of college and university politics aside, individual-orientation models of innovation require that attitude formation is the critical determinant as to whether change confirmation is adopted or rejected (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971). Clearly it is evident that if college and university EDAD scholars desire to remain in the contest of knowledge powershifts for leadership in our nation's schools into the twenty-first century, KB's are the admission price. Individual college and university EDAD professional preparation programs are going to have to operationalize a new visible and operational product for their constituencies - both internal and external- known as a KB. Both EDAD faculty and programs themselves must realize that KB development creates a tremendous disequilibrium within both the higher and public education community. College and university EDAD faculty must begin to cease the hunt for scapegoats and the endless, yet thorough, contemplation as to "why is this happening to us? We didn't cause this problem," to "how are we going to respond without being left behind?" The era of mass standardization and production of college and university EDAD professional

preparation programs has been assigned to the museum alongside the pterodactyl to be replaced instead by mass customization.

A Finnish maxim states that, "there are three types of individuals in the world: (1) those who *make* things happen; (2) those who *watch* what happen; and, (3) those who *wonder* what happened." College and university EDAD professional preparation programs and their faculty alike shall be in the third scenario in the twenty-first century wondering about the power of knowledge itself in lieu of controlling knowledge if KB's do not become intricate realities of their ventures. There exists diminutive doubt that continued staunch EDAD programmatic commitment to Bacon's medieval ethos regarding knowledge is incapable of carrying the discipline into the twenty first century.

College and university EDAD professional preparation program KB's, once made publicly visible and operationalized via curricula still remain vulnerable if permitted to exist within the indolence of the traditional EDAD construct. There is a hidden paradox in the powershift struggles of knowledge. As college and university EDAD professional preparation programs create more specialized and intricate KB's, there is, in addition to a surging demand for higher performances and standards, a counter effect to make KB's even more versatile by accommodating even more multiple standards of advanced knowledge and learning. Consequently no sooner than the long, semantic, and arduous process of intellectual development that results in a college and university EDAD professional preparation program KB as a visible and viable product concludes, new knowledge and technologies have driven it into obsolescence or irrelevancy while creating new multiple standards of knowledge. Thus as soon as college and

university EDAD professional preparation program creates its KB standard, the playing field itself alters into an even higher and more complex plane that likely has yet to even reinforce the players (i.e. EDAD faculty). It is there that the EDAD KB will become the battle front for the larger, continuing war over knowledge and practice standards that control, influence, and regulate advanced knowledge itself. In a necessary and responsive connotation to the KB a cybernetic servo-mechanism pertaining to EDAD's amalgamation of theory, research and wisdoms of practice is thereby proliferated.

Both college and university EDAD professional preparation programs and our nation's schools are currently exposed to a grave cycle of educational distress advanced by both internal and external constituencies for a variety of reasons. Response by EDAD scholars and educational leaders, unfortunately, appears to have found solace in the overt practice of deliberate inaction as opposed to legitimate KB wisdoms of practice. That deliberate inaction reinforces feeble leadership as an acceptable means of EDAD behavior catalyzing the indecisive stalling of effective public schools. In response to such indecisive stalling by EDAD scholars and practitioners Powers (1997) identified five educational leadership strategies that were necessary for a knowledge based transition into the twenty-first century. Those strategies were: (1) Knowledge Based Leadership Patterns; (2) Preferential Treatment for Excellent Performance; (3) Valid and Reliable Decision-making; (4) Consequence-based Responsibility; and, (5) Proactive Leadership Behavior.

It is crucial to further be cognizant of the fact that this "war" of EDAD knowledge standards is not limited to the local board of education meetings or the hallowed halls of

academe. It is raging in the home over traditional family values, in the work place over "isms", in churches over moral righteousness, in government over politically correct actions, in the world over human rights, in medicine over ethics and practice, in addition to secular interests identified by each citizen or special interest group. The battle front over who controls and influences knowledge about knowledge is no longer unidimensionally centered upon our nation's colleges and universities. It is everywhere and appears to have no visible boundaries in sight. Toffler (1990) summed it well ....

> "Despite exceptions and unevenness, contradictions and confusions, we are witnessing one of the most important changes in the history of power. For it is now indisputable that knowledge, the source of the highest quality power of all, is gaining importance with every fleeting nanosecond. The most important powershift of all, therefore, is not from one person, party, institution, or nation to another. It is the hidden shift in the relationship between violence, wealth, and knowledge as societies speed toward their collision with tomorrow. This is the dangerous, exhilarating secret of the "Powershift Era." (p. 464).

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